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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMCONSUL, LAGOS, NIGERIA

DESP. NO. 4 NEA MESSAGE CENTER DATE July 3, 1951

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON. AIR POUCH PRIORITY

REF : ---

SUBJECT: Fortnightly Review June 18-30, 1951

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Political

Having completed his tour of the Eastern Provinces, Dr. Nnamdi AZIKIWE and his electioneering party have during the past two weeks centered their activity in the British Cameroons. This visit having been completed it is Dr. Azikiwe's plan to invade the Northern Provinces. It is not known how extensive his visit will be or whether he will limit his appeal to the Southern elements residing in the North.

Dr. Azikiwe has sent a telegram to the Colonial Secretary demanding that the new constitution of Nigeria be published without delay. In addition he protested against the use of whispering votes in the Eastern Provinces for illiterate voters and against the Native Authorities forming half of the membership of the intermediate electoral colleges in Western Provinces. Finally in view of the non-publication of the constitution he demanded that the elections be postponed for three or four months until the full contents of the document are known. It appears obvious that Dr. Azikiwe and the NCNC are concerned as to their possibility of success under the electoral system which is to be used.

Some evidence of the influence of the Native Authorities can be seen in the results of the local government elections held in Oyo on June 22, 1951. Seats in the Oyo Council were filled by persons who have announced their support of the Action Group.

It has been announced that elections in the Western Provinces will begin August 20, 1951 and be completed on Monday, September 17, when the final elections for the House of Assembly will be held.

There has been considerable discussion of the apparent support given by Dr. Kwame NKRUMAH to the NCNC when he was in Lagos for a few hours on June 17. The NCNC delegated most of its important leaders to meet Dr. Nkrumah when he arrived and it was reported that Dr. Nkrumah criticized any regionalization of politics.

It is reported that several elements in Ibadan, the

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largest city in the Western Provinces, are advocating the conduct of elections on purely local issues, dissociating themselves from any particular party. There had been considerable dissension in Ibadan local government which recently resulted in Government investigation. These difficulties remain to be solved and it is quite possible that local influences will play a large part in deciding the elections.

Dr. Ibiyinka OLORUN-NIMBE, the Mayor of Lagos, has left Nigeria for the United Kingdom as one of the official guests of the British Government at the Festival of Britain. There are authoritative reports that Dr. Olorun-Nimbe plans to visit a Communist-inspired youth congress in Berlin prior to his return. The Department is aware that there are several Nigerian students in Berlin studying under the auspices of the East German Government. A young Nigerian student was arrested last week when he attempted to leave Nigeria on a forged passport with the intention of proceeding to Berlin to join the group already there. The trial of this young man began on Saturday, June 30, 1951, and facts which have to date come to light cast very serious accusations against the pro-Communist Nduka EZE who has been in charge of this German scholarship program. It is apparent that he collected a rather large sum from this prospective student prior to granting him his "scholarship". It is highly possible that Mr. Eze may have gotten himself into difficulties from which it will not be so easy to extricate himself as it has been in the past. He has been under serious criticism from elements within his own Union during the last month for alleged embezzlement of funds and it is extremely doubtful that he will be able to escape the clutches of the law for much longer. The removal of Mr. Eze from the political scene will no doubt seriously impair the very limited activities of Communism within Nigeria.

Economic

Trade statistics just published for the first three months of 1951 reveal important increases in all fields over the comparable period for 1950. Exports to the United States have almost doubled in value while imports remain at almost the same level. It seems likely, however, that the volume of imports from the United States will show some increase this year owing to the inability of Nigerian importers to purchase their needs from other sources. It will, however, be somewhat difficult for them to procure goods within the United States, the dollar restriction program since the war having cut many importers off from their American sources of supply and it may be doubted that in a period of short supply American exporters will be greatly interested in a market which was of so little importance during the recent period. It will be of interest to observe what effect American price fixing and the cessation of tin purchases will have on Government revenue

this year. The costs of delivering cocoa, for example, in the United States are increasing to a marked extent while it is doubtful that the purchase price will increase accordingly.

The dissensions within the labor movement continue unabated and the most recent source of friction has been an invitation received from the ICFTU for two representatives of the Nigerian labor movement to visit Milan as observers at the forthcoming ICFTU Conference. It is understood that ICFTU has undertaken to pay the cost of these two delegates should they be chosen. Recently a meeting of the several trade unionists was held at which Mr. Ralph ANIEDOBE, Secretary of the Nigerian Brewery Workers' Union and the Domestic Servants' Union, and Mr. Archibong E. OKON, Secretary of the Amalgamated Dock Workers Union, were chosen to go to Milan. This choice created quite an outcry among those leaders who were not represented, most of whom have been associated with the Nigerian Labor Congress which is affiliated with the WFTU. Under the circumstances, it is not yet known whether anyone will represent the Nigerian labor movement. The largest of the Nigerian unions, the Amalgamated Union of U.A.C. African Workers, appears to be in a state of dissolution owing to dissension caused by the activities of Mr. Eze.

Considerable publicity has recently been given to experiments in the use of antrycide in the protection of cattle from trypanosomiasis infection. At several of the Government experimental stations semi-annual inoculations have been made. There is some doubt as to what effect this will have on the Nigerian cattle industry since it will be hard to enforce such frequent inoculation for the large number of cattle in the country and it appears that resistance will break down if cattle is used as draught animals which is usually the case in Nigeria.

Mr. Daniel BROAD has arrived in Lagos as the Trade Commissioner of the United Kingdom in West Africa. An Assistant Trade Commissioner, Mr. R. W. AYRES, has been in Lagos for some time setting up the office here. Mr. Broad will devote most of his time to encouraging and facilitating trade between West Africa and the United Kingdom.

Information and Education

A USIS release concerning the decoration of nine Negro soldiers during the Korean campaign was given considerable publicity throughout the Nigerian press. The West African Pilot which has little space or time for the publication of releases during the last couple of months found it possible to publish this item.

Criticism of Mr. K. Ozuomba MBADIWE and his African Academy of Arts and Research continues unabated and Mr. Mbadiwe has

informed the Consulate General that he no longer intends to financially sponsor students in the United States. He will limit his activity to assisting students desiring to study in American colleges and universities. It appears likely that the number of students who will proceed to the United States this year will be below that of the previous year. This is due to the increasing cost of such studies and the continuing reports of financial difficulties of Nigerian students.

A. W. Childs
American Consul General

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